

We claim:

1. A voice dialing system comprising:

a directory including entries for telephone numbers that may be called by a user;

a called party cache including entries a user is considered likely to call; and

a voice dialing module for receiving a voice input from a user and identifying a directory entry matching the voice input, the voice dialing module being operative to assign an increased likelihood of matching to a directory entry appearing in the called party cache.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein entries within the called party cache are associated with indicia indicating a probability that a contact represented by an entry will be called by the user.

3. The system of claim 2, wherein the directory may include multiple entries for a party, each entry identifying a contact location at which the party may be called.

4. The system of claim 3, wherein one or more entries associated with a party may appear in the cache, the appearance and relative position in the cache of an entry associated with a party indicating a probability that the user will call the party at the location indicated by the entry.

5. The system of claim 4, wherein the call probabilities for entries within the called party cache are based on a past history of calls by the user.

6. The system of claim 4, wherein the call probabilities for entries within the called party cache are based on knowledge of the user as a caller.

7. The system of claim 6, wherein the knowledge of the user as a caller includes knowledge of an organization in which the user is employed.

8. The system of claim 4, wherein the voice dialing module is operative to create a

list of voice recognition results representing possible matches to the voice input, the list of recognition results being ordered by confidence score, the voice dialing module being further operative to reorder the list if one or more entries in the list appears in the called party cache.

9. The system of claim 8, wherein the voice dialing module reorders the list by moving entries in the list that also appear in the cache to a higher position in the list.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein the voice dialing module reorders the list by adding an increment to the confidence score of all entries in the list that reappear in the cache and reordering the list on the basis of the changed confidence score.

11. The system of claim 10, wherein an initial set of entries to the called party cache for a user is made when a user is added as a possible user of the system.

12. The system of claim 11, wherein the called party cache is reordered when an entry in the called party cache is determined to match a voice input provided by a user in voice dialing, the reordering being performed so as to take into account the estimated probability that the entry will be called by the user in the future.

13. The system of claim 12, wherein an entry is added to the called party cache if a directory entry matches a voice input by the user and the entry does not appear in the called party cache.

14. The system of claim 10, wherein if the called party cache is full and an addition is to be made, an entry is deleted from the called party cache before making the addition, the deleted entry being the entry having the lowest estimated likelihood that it will be called by the user.

15. A method of voice dialing, comprising the steps of:  
receiving a voice input from a user indicating a party the user wishes to call; and

identifying potential directory entries matching the voice input, taking into account the estimated likelihood that each entry will be called by a user.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the step of identifying potential directory entries includes constructing a matching entry list of entries potentially matching the voice input, comparing the matching entry list to a called party cache including entries estimated as likely to be called by the user and reordering the matching entry list if one or more entries in the list matches an entry in the called party cache.

17. The method of claim 16, followed by a step of sequentially presenting the entries in the matching entry list to the user for confirmation and dialing an entry upon receiving confirmation from the user.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the step of sequentially presenting the entries to the user for confirmation is followed by a step of determining if the matching entry appears in the cache and adding the matching entry to the cache if it does not appear in the cache.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the step of sequentially presenting the entries to the user for confirmation is followed by a step of reordering the cache if the matching entry does not appear in the cache.